GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:108
ANSWERED ON:21.07.2003
SOCIAL HEALTH INSURANCE SYSTEM
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Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the benefits of social security, social health insurance system to common man, labour and down trodden people;

(b) whether the Government are aware of the lack of development of Social Health Insurance System in India;

(c) if so, whether countries like Japan, Korea etc. are fully covered thereunder while in India coverage of only 22% population is available;

(d) if so, whether the Ministry of Labour (ESIS) has made any efforts or prepared any plan and conducted a coordinated study in this regard with the help of some other ministries;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the corrective measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR & PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR)

(a) to (c): Approximately 8 per cent of the country's total workforce of around forty crores are covered by Social Security provisions like Old-age Pension, Family Pension, lump sum benefit at the time of death, medical benefits, disability benefits. These workers are mostly in the organized sector.

Further, a large number of workers in the unorganised sector are eligible to get Social Security benefits like those available under Workmen's Compensation Act, Maternity Benefit Act and Payment of Gratuity Act. A Social Security Group Insurance Scheme for identified groups is being operated through Life Insurance Corporation. Some State Governments have also introduced schemes which provide some social security covers for the workers in the unorganised sector.

The number of workers in the unorganised sector being huge and widely dispersed, the extension of a comprehensive social security cover to such workers is a gigantic task and would be a time consuming effort requiring massive resources. The main objective for both Employees Provident Fund Organisation and ESI Corporation is to increase the coverage of identifiable groups.

(d) to (f): The Government is in the process of gradually extending the scheme to cover new centers and simultaneously taking steps for creating of requisite infrastructure for providing medical care to a larger number of insured persons and their families. There have been a number of new developments in the ESIS during the past five years. Each year, it is extended to new areas to cover additional employees.